H. W. Rankin

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN SCIENCE?

BY

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WHAT IS CHRISTIAN ∴ SCIENCE?

AN EXAMINATION OF
THE METAPHYSICAL,
THE THEOLOGICAL, AND
THE THERAPEUTIC
THEORIES OF THE SYSTEM,

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PREFACE.

Since this little treatise was so fortunate as to win the approval of my brethren of the clergy to whom it was first read, I have been induced to publish it, in order that its sphere of usefulness may be widened.

Among the many books and lesser publications which I have read and used in the preparation of this treatise, I desire to mention the Rev. Dr. Buckley's essay on "Christian Science and Mind Cure"; the Rev. H. M. Tenney's "Christian Science, its Truths and Errors"; the essays upon the same subject by an anonymous writer in "The Churchman" for April 11th, and May 2nd, 1896; and "Hypnotism" by Dr. Albert Moll of Berlin.

The numbers at the bottom of the pages refer to the pages of "Science and Health," 89th edition, 1894, unless otherwise stated.

May what I have written redound to the greater glory of God.

Highland Park, November 21st, 1896.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The period which immediately preceded and followed the introduction of Christianity into the world, was one of the most momentous in the history of our race, and one which in many ways bears a close resemblance to that in which we live.

It was characterized by the most splendid intellectual civilization known to history, a civilization which our own closely resembles, but which was marked by achievements in art, literature, and philosophy, to which we have not yet attained.

Like our own it was a period of great wealth on one hand, and deep poverty on the other; a time of reckless luxury, and widespread profligacy.

Like our own too, it was a time of general unrest and great and rapid changes; and when St. Paul stood on Mar's Hill, those forces of disintegration were already at work, which were

destined to bring to the ground the most splendid fabric ever reared by man.

The comparison which might be made between that period and our own, suggests many impressive lessons, and chief among them is this: that as Christianity then preserved from destruction all that was fit to survive the cataclysm which overwhelmed that splendid civilization, so Christianity is the hope and the safeguard of our Republic to-day in the midst of those perils by which we are threatened.

Among the most marked peculiarities of the period of which we are speaking, was the rise of many new and eccentric systems in religion and philosophy, such as Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism.

This latter was an attempt to revive the original Platonism, and was the final effort of the ancient philosophic spirit, and marks the exhaustion of ancient thinking, and the dissolution of the old intellectual systems. It was not a single coherent system, but followed various lines of development, and issued into many curious and fantastic schools of thought.

Among all Neo-Platonists there was exhibited a tendency to mysticism, theosophy, and magic. Some claimed special divine illumination and

power to work miracles. They professed to be hierophants as well as philosophers, and represented a Pagan copy of Christianity.

Whoever cares to do so may read of the absurd vagaries and extravagancies into which the men of that day rushed, of the mysticism, and ecstacy, and wonder working which marked their eccentric forms of belief and practice; of their credulity and their exaggeration of the subjective; their dependence upon visions and dreams, oracles and wonders.[1] Immediately one is reminded of the similar forms of error which prevail so widely to-day, and which, occurring in a period presenting similar social and intellectual characteristics, are apparently due to similar causes, and if unchecked, will issue into similar results. Spiritualism, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, Theosophy, Faith Healing, Christian Science, and a dozen others are all manifestations of this same spirit of unrest.

All present novelties in speculation and practice, and all exhibit various degrees of divergence from that calm and sane standard of thought and practice which is characteristic of the religion of Christ.

It is my purpose in this treatise to discuss

[1]Vide Schwegler's "History of Philosophy," § xxi.

Christian Science, one of the latest and most active of these systems, and one especially dangerous, in that it claims to represent the mind of our Divine Master, and is so cunningly devised that it is calculated to deceive, if possible, the very elect. It comes as a tempter offering to man to-day the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and of the tree of life.

We hold it as an axiom that no system of belief can have power over the hearts and minds of men, except it have within it elements of truth, from which it proceeds by wrong methods and false deductions to mistaken conclusions. It would be both uncharitable and unphilosophic to ascribe to the teachers of this, or any similar system, a purpose to deceive those they teach, or to lead them into errors of belief or practice; rather, they are those unlearned and unstable souls of whom St. Peter speaks, who wrest the truth into error, and having in themselves no steadfastness, draw others after them to the denial of the faith, and to their own destruction.

In taking up the study of so-called Christian Science, we must determine first of all, to be fair to it, and so far as we may, to separate what is true in it from what is false, what is perma-

nent, from what if left to itself must shortly come to naught.

Christian Science is a metaphysical system which professes to interpret the science of life as revealed by Jesus Christ, and claims to free men from the power of sin, disease and death.

In examining it, it is natural that we should consider first its metaphysics, second, its theology, and third, its therapeutics.

CHAPTER II.

THE METAPHYSICS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

About thirty years ago, Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy discovered, according to her own statement, "The Science of Metaphysical Healing," and named it "Christian Science."

"When apparently near the confines of mortal existence, standing already within the shadow of the death valley," there flashed upon her the "discovery that erring, mortal, misnamed *mind* produces all the organism and action of the mortal body," whatever that may mean, "and led up to the demonstration of the proposition that Mind is All, and matter is naught, as the leading factor in Mind-science." "Christian Science," she continues, "reveals incontrovertibly that Mind is All-in-all, that the only realities are the divine Mind and Idea. This great fact is not, however, seen to be supported by sensible evidence, until its principle is demonstrated by healing the sick, and thus proven absolute and divine."[1] Christian Science

[1] "Science and Health," p. 3.

she claims, is a re-discovery of the power employed by Christ in healing the sick, and must be accepted and believed before we can have a right understanding of Christian truth and revelation.

The fundamentals of Christian Science as stated by the discoverer and chief teacher of the system, are summarized in four propositions, which to her appear self-evident, and which she further states, "will be found to agree in statement and proof, even if read backward." I for one, am ready to agree that they read quite as well one way as the other. The four propositions are as follows:

"I. God is All.

"II. God is Good. God is Mind.

"III. God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.

"IV. Life, God, omnipotent Good, deny death, evil, sin, disease.—Disease sin, evil, death, deny Good, omnipotent God, Life."

"The metaphysics of Christian Science," she continues, "like the rules of mathematics, prove the truth by inversion. For example: there is no pain in Truth, and no truth in pain; no matter in Mind, and no mind in matter; no nerves in Intelligence, and no intelligence in nerves;

no matter in Life, and no life in matter; no matter in Good, and no good in matter."[1] How these astonishing and incoherent propositions, uttered with such sententious gravity, can be said to prove anything, is not plain to me, although to others it may be. It reminds me of nothing so much, as of that saying of the Duchess in "Alice in Wonderland": "Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise."

"Science and Health," the remarkable book of more than 600 pages, from which I have quoted these statements and definitions, has recently passed its hundredth edition, which indicates a popularity that certainly is not due to its literary merits. If the author is to be believed, this is the only true and authoritative exposition of the science of Metaphysical Healing; indeed she is severe in her arraignment of all other teachers of the science who dissent from her teaching at any point, or fail to acknowledge her claims to originality and absolute truth. She practically asserts her infallibility,

[1] p. 7.

saying: "No human pen or tongue taught me the science contained in this book, Science and Health, and neither tongue nor pen can ever overthrow it."

Of the literary character of this unique volume some idea may be obtained from the passages I have already quoted, and to one under the domination of what the author characterizes as "mortal mind," it appears to be beneath criticism, since it is written without a trace of literary art, and is without a single redeeming grace of style to relieve the tedium of disjointed, inconsequential, dogmatic and egotistical assertion and repetition. One may open the book almost at random and read in either direction without materially modifying the character of the argument, or the sequence of ideas. Of argument, indeed, there is none in the ordinary use of the word, since the entire volume is a loose bundle of disjointed assertions, based upon an ill-digested conception of the philosophy of Idealism.

The Idealism of Berkeley is evidently the basis of the metaphysics of Christian Science, but Mrs. Eddy anticipates the charge, and defends herself against it by saying: "Those who formerly sneered at it as foolish and eccentric, now

declare Bishop Berkeley, David Hume, Ralph Waldo Emerson, certain German philosophers, or some unlearned mesmerist to have been the real originators of Mind Healing. Emerson's ethics are models of their kind; but even that good man and genial philosopher partially lost his mental faculties before his death, showing that he did not understand the science of Mind Healing, as elaborated in my Science and Health; nor did he pretend to do so."

Although Berkeley is not referred to in the later editions of this book, yet it is easy to show to how great an extent he anticipated Mrs. Eddy in the promulgation of her theories regarding mind and matter.

Thus Berkeley teaches that our sensations are wholly subjective, and that we are in error if we believe that we have a sensation of external objects, or perceive them. That which we have and perceive is only our sensation. The so-called objects exist only in our notion, and have a being only as perceived. It is not possible, he claims, that material things should produce anything so wholly distinct from themselves as sensations and notions. There is no such thing as a material external world. Mind alone exists as thinking being, whose nature consists in

thinking and willing. But whence then arise all our sensations which are not the products of our will? They come from God, who gives us ideas. Ideas exist in God, and we derive them from Him. In consequence of this view, says Berkeley, we do not deny an independent reality of things, we only deny that they can exist elsewhere than in an understanding.[1]

Thus while Berkeley denied the independent existence of matter, considering such a subjective idealism as the surest way to oppose materialism and atheism, he never advanced beyond the philosophical concept, nor reduced his theory to an absurdity by attempting to apply it to the affairs of daily life, and the conclusions of universal experience.

Mrs. Eddy assures us that to escape from sin, sickness and death, it is only necessary to believe in the non-existence of matter.

"Nothing" she tells us, "that man can say or believe regarding matter is true, except that matter is unreal, and therefore a belief."[2]

Free the mind, therefore, of a belief in sin and you will be sinless. "Eradicate all thoughts of physiology, drugs, laws of health, sickness and pain; know that God is the only panacea,

[1] Vide Schwegler § xxxiv. [2] p. 173.

divine love the only medicine," and you will be well.

"A system of healing that denies the existence of a material body to be healed, is too absurd for discussion."[1] A system that in one breath recognizes the existence of physical disease, only to deny it in the next. According to this theory, drugs and poisons have no power over material bodies for good or ill. Whatever effects they produce are due to a mistaken belief in their potency. "Men think they will act thus and so on the physical system, and consequently they do; free your mind from this belief, and their power vanishes." Christian Science, Mrs. Eddy tells us, divests material drugs of their imaginary power.

"When the sick recover by the use of drugs, it is the law of a general belief, culminating in individual faith, that heals; and according to this faith will the effect be."[2]

"The not uncommon notion that drugs produce absolute, inherent, curative virtues of their own involves an error," says Dr. Marston, a teacher of this same science. "Arnica, quinine, opium, could not produce the effects ascribed to them except by imputed virtue. Men think they

[1] "The Churchman," April 11, 1896. [2] Page 48.

will act thus on the physical system, and consequently they do. The property of alcohol is to intoxicate; but if the common thought had endowed it with a nourishing quality like milk, it would produce a similar effect.

"A curious question arises about the origin of healing virtues, if it be admitted that all drugs were originally destitute of them.

"We can conceive of a time in the mental history of the race when no therapeutic value was assigned to certain drugs, when in fact, it was not known that they possessed any. How did it come to pass that common thought, or any thought, endowed them with healing virtue in the first place? Simply in this way. Man finding himself unprotected, and liable to be hurt by the elements in the midst of which he lived, forgot the true source of healing, and began to seek earnestly for material remedies for diseases and wounds. The desire for something led to experiments, and with each trial there was associated the hope that the means applied would prove efficacious. Then what at first was an earnest hope came to be a belief; and thus by gradual steps, a belief in the whole contents of the pharmacopœia was established."[1] Surely

[1] Quoted in Buckley's "Faith Healing, etc," p. 204.

this is midsummer madness. It is true as every physician knows, that the effect of a medicine may be assisted or hindered by imagination, and that sugar pellets and vials of colored water sometimes appear to produce the effects of the remedies they simulate; but this new science teaches us that if it were commonly believed that strychnine were a proper remedy to administer to infants for colic, it would be as harmless as an infusion of catnip; whereas if catnip were conceived to be a deadly poison it would produce effects as violent as those which now follow the administration of strychnine. Why then, we naturally ask, should the administration of a poison prove fatal to a person who takes it in complete ignorance of its imputed character? Who takes, let us say, morphine by mistake for quinine? Why under those circumstances, should not the effect commonly attributed to quinine be produced?

It is not the drug that has inherent potency, we are told, but the belief. Why then should not the effect upon the physical body correspond to the belief in accordance with which it was taken, rather than to any supposititious quality inherent in the drug itself?

Again, why should a dose of strychnine kill

an unconscious infant, or a dog that swallows it hidden in a mouthful of meat? Certainly neither the one nor the other has any belief regarding the effect of strychnine upon the mortal body, nor any consciousness that it has been taken; why then should the characteristic effect of the drug be manifested, and why should death ensue? These questions do not stagger Mrs. Eddy; she has considered the matter and this is her explanation.

"If a dose of poison is swallowed through mistake, and the patient dies, even though physician and patient are expecting favorable results, does belief, you ask, cause this death? Even so, and as directly as if the poison had been intentionally taken. In such cases a few persons believe the potion swallowed by the patient to be harmless; but the vast majority of mankind, though they know nothing of this particular case and this special person, believe the arsenic, the strychnine, or whatever drug be used, to be poisonous, for it has been set down as a poison by mortal mind. The consequence is that the result is controlled by the majority of opinions outside, not by the infinitesimal minority of opinions in the sick chamber. The remote cause or belief, is pronounced stronger

than the predisposing and exciting cause, because of its priority, and the connection of past mortal thoughts with present."[1] But in such a case as our author assumes, how does the majority opinion enter into the matter at all? The poison is taken in ignorance by all concerned. If it were consciously taken we might understand it, but how does a majority opinion attach itself to a drug administered in full confidence that it is not only harmless, but salutary, and render it deadly? Or why should this remarkable majority opinion always associate particular effects with particular drugs? Why should the effect of strychnine be unvarying? Why should it not sometimes resemble that of morphine? Supposing the drug to be affected by some chemical deterioration unknown to the persons who use it, why should its effects be modified thereby if belief alone gives it potency? And finally, why should the majority opinion on the part of mortal mind kill a dog that has ignorantly swallowed poison? The explanation given does not explain anything, it only throws dust in the eyes of reason; and it seems hopeless to argue with a person who is capable of advancing a theory so absurd and illogical.

[1]Page 70.

Mrs. Eddy is unshrinking in the application of her theory. She says, "You can even educate a healthy horse so far in physiology that he will take cold without his blanket; whereas the wild animal, left to his instincts sniffs the wind with delight. The epizootic is a humanly evolved ailment which a wild horse might never have."[1] So, I may add, might a domesticated horse never have it. It seems almost unnecessary to point to the obvious fact that the animal accustomed to his stable and blanket, is less able to resist cold than one that has been hardened by exposure. If the assumed theory were correct, then wild animals which have never been subjected to the domination of "erring, mortal, misnamed mind" would never suffer from physical ailments, nor from the effects of heat and cold, unless indeed, this destructive majority opinion should contrive in some way to get at them, but to anyone who has any knowledge of the facts in the case, this example seems to be of the nature of a *reductio ad absurdum.*

The subject of mechanical injuries to the body is one that strains to the utmost the theory we are considering, and it is a subject which our author appears to avoid; yet she says,

[1] p. 72.

"Have no fears that matter can ache, swell, and be inflamed, from a law of any kind, when it is self-evident that matter can have no pain or inflammation. Your body would suffer no more from tension or wounds, than the trunk of a tree you gash, or the electric wire which you stretch, were it not for mortal mind." [1]

"When an accident happens you think, or exclaim, 'I am hurt,' your thought is more powerful than your words, more powerful than the accident itself to make the injury real. Now reverse the process. Declare you are not hurt, and understand the reason why; and you will find the ensuing good results to be in exact proportion to your disbelief in physics, and your fidelity to God." [2] "Man is indestructible and eternal. Some time it will be learned that mind constructs the body, and with its own materials. Hence no breakage or dislocation can really occur. You say that accidents, injuries, and disease kill man; but this is not true. The life of man is Mind. The material body manifests only what mortal mind admits, whether it be a broken bone, disease, or sin." [3]

A broken bone indeed, ought to the Christian Scientist to be a very slight inconvenience, since

[1] p. 392. [2] p. 396. [3] p. 400.

"bones have only the substantiality of thought which formed them. They are only an appearance, a subjective state of mortal mind. The so-called substance of bone is formed first by the parent's mind, through self-division. Soon the child becomes a separate, individualized thought, another mortal mind, which speedily takes possession of itself."[1] Nevertheless, we are advised that "until the advancing age admits the efficacy and supremacy of mind, it is better to leave the adjustment of broken bones and dislocations to the fingers of a surgeon, while you confine yourself to mental reconstruction, and the prevention of inflammation or protracted confinement. Christian Science is always the most skillful surgeon, but surgery is the branch of its healing which will be last demonstrated."[2] This, I think, is very sensible advice.

We are told that "food neither strengthens nor weakens the body," and that "heat and cold are products of mind."[3] Yet neither our author nor her disciples, so far as I have heard, have advanced sufficiently to dispense with food, fire and clothing.

In this connection I have said enough perhaps, of this book which asserts that it is "not

[1] p. 421. [2] p. 400. [3] p. 373.

the work of a human pen," but it is impossible without protest to pass by such claims of infallibility, or to ignore such monumental egotism as appears in the following passage.

"The perusal of the author's publications heals sickness constantly. If patients sometimes seem the worse for reading this book, the change may either arise from the alarm of the physician, or may mark the crisis of the disease. Perseverance in its perusal has generally healed them completely."[1] And again, "A Christian Scientist requires my work on Science and Health for his text-book, and so do all his students and patients." (At three dollars a copy.) "Why? First: Because it is the voice of truth to this age, and contains the whole of Christian Science, or the Science of healing through Mind. Second: Because it was the first published book containing a statement of Christian Science, gave the first rules for demonstrating this Science, and registered this revealed truth, uncontaminated with human hypotheses. Other works, which have borrowed from this book without giving it credit, have adulterated the Science. Third: Because this work has done more for teacher and student,

[1] p. 443.

for healer and patient, than has been accomplished by other works."[1]

It is evident that Mrs. Eddy does not agree with the wise man who said, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth."

Considering the benefits which this book is said to confer upon humanity, one would think that it might be sold at a less price than that which in the case of any other book of equal character as to its size and mechanical execution, would be considered exorbitant, especially so, since it is published in large editions and by E. J. Foster Eddy, M. D. It is not to be wondered at that the author appends this note to her preface: "The author takes no patients, and declines medical consultation."

In the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, of which she is the President, the charge, I am told, for the course of twelve primary lectures is, or was, $300. While for the six Normal Class lectures students must pay $200. Evidently Mrs. Eddy does not apply to money her views of matter, nor consider it a delusion of mortal mind.

[1] p. 453.

CHAPTER III.

THE THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

It is not easy to write of the theology of Christian Science, since it is expressed in language so vague and unscientific that it is difficult to say with certainty what is the exact nature of its conclusions.

Theology is the science which treats of the nature and attributes of God, and His relation to His creatures; and it is most important that its conclusions be expressed in language so clear and definite that there shall be no possibility for the introduction of errors under the guise of truth. Without doubt Mrs. Eddy and her followers are sincere in their devotion to the principles they teach, and believe that they express the mind of God, and the spirit of Holy Scripture, but the same eccentricities and intellectual vagaries which characterize their metaphysical theories distort their views of Christian theology. They twist and pervert the Scriptures to make them agree with their opinions, and empty

them of the plain and evident meanings which men in every age have found in them.

The result is curious and perplexing to the last degree.

Let us see how Christian Science agrees with the Catholic faith as it is expressed in the Apostle's and the Nicene creeds.

First with regard to the personality of God. Is He a person, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, self-conscious and self-determined? Christian Science says: "God is divine Principle, supreme incorporeal Being, Mind, Spirit, Soul, Life, Truth, Love."[1] "God is all-inclusive, and is reflected by everything real and eternal. He fills all space, and it is impossible to conceive of such omnipresence and individuality except as Mind."[2] "If the term *personality* as applied to God, means *infinite personality*, then God is personal Being—in this sense, but not in the lower sense."[3] It is "as Principle, not person, that He saves man, instead of pardons him."[4] These and many similar passages would seem to deny that God is a person in any true sense of the word, and yet in a letter to the Reverend H. M. Tenney quoted in his admirable little book on Christian Science, Mrs. Eddy

[1] Page 461. [2] Page 227. [3] Page 10. [4] Index.

says, "It is the material or corporeal personality of God that I deny. God is an individual Being, self-conscious and self-determined."[1] So that on this point we can only say that the language used by Christian Scientists is vague and misleading, and calculated to convey the impression that God is a cold and distant abstraction, not a loving Father; a principle and not a person. Not the God who delights to hear and answer prayer; indeed, we are told that "Prayer to a personal God is a hindrance."[2]

And so I submit that the whole drift of the teaching in "Science and Health" on this point is Pantheistic, and that it is calculated to obscure belief in the personality and fatherhood of God.

The Nicene creed states that God is the "Maker of all things visible and invisible." And the voice of inspiration declares that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and that "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

This is contradicted by our author who declares that "God never created matter for there is nothing in spirit out of which matter could

[1] Tenney "Christian Science," page 31. [2] Index.

be made,"[1] and "nothing we can say or believe regarding matter is true, except that matter is unreal, and is therefore a belief, which has its beginning and ending."[2]

Now, if God did not make "the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is," how did they come into being? for not even Mrs. Eddy denies their existence. "Science," she tells us, "reveals that what is termed *matter*, is but a manifestation of mortal mind." "In other words," to quote Mr. Tenney again, "this rebel thought, which started off from the perfect man without his consent, and set up for itself, is the author of this whole material universe as it appears to man. When the astronomer points his telescope to the heavens and discovers a comet or an asteroid, he finds simply an inverted idea reflected by inverted thought. When the chemist discovers a new reaction, he simply hits upon an inverted thought, which though utterly unknown to the scientific world, must have emanated from some mortal mind. In a word, the whole universe, from the glorious orbs in the heavens, to the minutest object in the microscopic world, is but the reflection of a mind which is as unreal as a shadow of a shadow.

[1] Page 230. [2] Page 173.

Hamlet in his madness, was an advanced Christian Scientist.

"This goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you—this brave o'erhanging firmament—this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors."

There is some coherency in the idealism of Bishop Berkeley; he denies indeed the reality of the external universe, but affirms that what seems to be the material world consists of ideas which God is constantly projecting into our minds. But that thought without a thinker, and thought wrong side up at that, should be able to create out of itself that which appears to be the splendid universe of matter, is as wild an assumption as any "mortal mind" has yet produced.[1]

Pantheism is the doctrine which asserts that God is the only substance, of which the material universe and man are only manifestations. It teaches that God and the universe are identical, and is accompanied with a denial of God's personality. Mrs. Eddy, as we have seen, denies a material creation, and at least by infer-

[1] Tenney, page 36.

ence, denies a spiritual creation as well, since she holds that all that really is, is a reflection of the Divine Mind, and in consequence has always existed, and will forever exist. Since God is all, there can be no increase or diminution in the sum of being.

She says, "In one sense God is identical with nature; but this nature is spiritual, and not expressed in matter."[1] It is an erroneous postulate of belief, she adds, to say "that substance, life, and intelligence are something apart from God." It follows then, that since all that really is, is God; and "God without the image and likeness of Himself, would be a nonentity";[2] and "man divorced from spirit would be a nonentity,—for man is co-existent with God";[3] that God and man and nature are one and identical. If this is not Pantheism, it is perilously near it.

Mrs. Eddy condemns Pantheism, but defines it as "a belief in the intelligence of matter."[4] She classes it with Agnosticism, Theosophy, Spiritualism, and Millenarianism, as opposed to Christian Science.

If Pantheism consists, as she seems to think, in a belief in the existence of matter, or in its

[1] Page 13. [2] Page 199. [3] Page 473. [4] Page 23.

intelligence, then nothing can be further from her mind; but if Pantheism be what I have defined it, and what all men in the past have thought it to be, then her declaration that "Nothing possesses reality or existence, except Mind, God," is distinctly Pantheistic.

In justice to the founder of Christian Science however, I must say that in my opinion what she desires to teach is not strictly speaking, Pantheism, but the doctrine of the immanence of God, which is a very different thing, and when carefully defined a wholesome and necessary doctrine to be insisted upon in these days, as a corrective to the materialism of the age. By the immanence of God, we mean that He is everywhere present in nature, and that from Him all things have their being, and that He cannot delegate His power to demigods called "second causes." It teaches "That the infinite and eternal power that is manifested in every pulsation of the universe, is none other than the living God." But we also mean that though nothing can exist without Him, yet that nothing is what he is; and it is at this point, and in the denial of the facts of material creation, that Christian Science parts company with the Bible and the theology of the Christian Church.

The language of Christian Science with reference to our Lord Jesus Christ is always reverent and guarded. His virgin-birth is distinctly asserted, and He is declared to be the great Master and expounder of the Science of Metaphysical Healing. As might be anticipated however, the strange ideas of divinity which are inseparable from this system give to our author's teaching regarding the person and work of our Lord, a novelty and strangeness which cannot be reconciled with the historic conception of the Incarnation and the Atonement. In the first place, a distinction is made between Jesus the Son of Mary, and the Christ; by which it is made to appear that "the invisible Christ was incorporeal, whereas Jesus was a corporeal or bodily existence."[1] "Jesus of Nazareth was the most scientific man that ever trod the globe. He plunged beneath the material surface of things, and found their spiritual cause,"[2] and "The Christ is the divinity of the man Jesus."[3]

Jesus was "a godlike and glorified man"[4] and "the Christ dwelt forever in the bosom of the principle of the man Jesus."[5]

While "He expressed the highest type in that

[1] Page 229. [2] Page 209. [3] Page 331. [4] Page 359.
[5] Page 334.

age which a fleshly form could express"[1] and was "the highest human concept of the perfect man"[2] He was, after all only "a human corporeal concept."[3]

"This dual personality, of the seen and the unseen, the spiritual and the material, the Christ and Jesus, continued until the Master's ascension, when the human, the corporeal concept, or Jesus, disappeared, while His invisible self, or Christ, continued to exist in the eternal order of Divine Science, taking away the sins of the world, as the Christ had always done, even before the human Jesus was incarnate to mortal eyes."[4]

We have here an explicit denial of the doctrine of the Catholic Church, which asserts that "The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, and of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very man."

The Jesus of Christian Science was a man, the most spiritual that had lived up to that time,

[1] Page 228. [2] Page 478. [3] Page 229. [4] p. 229.

but notwithstanding His virgin-birth, only a man. The Christ is the expressed image of "God's spiritual, eternal idea" but indistinguishable from the Father.

The Holy Ghost is "Divine Science; the developments of eternal Life, Truth, and Love."[1]

Christian Science teaches that Jesus never truly ascended into heaven, but that He disappeared, while His invisible self, or Christ, continued to exist in the eternal order of Divine Science.

Our Lord had no true human body, but "to accommodate Himself to immature ideas of spiritual power, Jesus called the body which he raised from the grave, 'flesh and bones.'"[2] He wore "in part a human form (that is, as it seemed to mortal view) being conceived by a mortal mother."[3]

His human body therefore, was only an appearance, and He could not truly have suffered upon the cross, unless He had been in the condition of "mortal mind"; this indeed seems to be asserted in the passage in "Science and Health," which says, "Jesus bore our sins in His body. He knew the mortal error which constitutes the material body, and could destroy that error; but at the time when Jesus felt our infirmities, He

[1] p. 579. [2] p. 209 [3] p. 211.

had not conquered all the beliefs of the flesh, or His sense of material life, nor had He risen to His final demonstration of spiritual power."[3] That is to say, He did not grasp and comprehend the Science of Life as, for instance, the rediscoverer and great modern teacher of the system does.

If "suffering is an error of sinful sense," then our Lord if He suffered, must have been in a state of "sinful sense"; or else His "awful agony" of which Mrs. Eddy speaks was an illusion.

We are told that "the burden of that hour was terrible beyond human conception." What could that burden have been, if "He knew the mortal error which constitutes the material body, and could destroy that error"?

It is difficult to understand what conception of our Lord's nature Mrs. Eddy can have in the face of all these perplexing and contradictory statements. It cannot be a clear and consistent view; I do not see how it can be such as to inspire faith and love. It certainly is far removed from all that the Church has taught as truth, for she revives the condemned falsehoods of the Arians, the Nestorians, the Sabellians and the

[3] Page 358.

Docetæ, and fuses them together into one monstrous and inconsistent heresy.

After a careful examination of the writings of so-called Christian Science with reference to its teaching concerning the nature and person of our Savior Christ, I can only say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

The Atonement has no place in the theology of Christian Science, since it does not recognize the existence of sin, nor the need of reconciliation with God. This is a necessary consequence of the denial of human personality, and the teaching that man is the reflection of God, co-existent with Him and immortal.[1] Mrs. Eddy affirms that "the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human belief, until God strips off their disguise."[2]

"Man is spiritual and perfect; he is incapable of sin, sickness, and death, inasmuch as he derives his essence from God, and possesses not a single original, or underived power. Hence the real man cannot depart from holiness. Nor can God, by whom man was evolved, engender the capacity or freedom to sin."[3] "Evil is an

[1] Page 473. [2] Page 468. [3] Page 471.

illusion, and error, and has no real basis. It is a false belief."[1] "If soul could sin, or be lost through sin, then Being and Immortality would be lost, with all the faculties of Mind; but Being cannot be lost while God exists."[2]

"Sin exists only so long as the material illusion remains: it is the sense of sin, and not the sinful soul, which must be lost."[3]

As sin is an illusion, so "sickness is no more the reality of being than sin is," and "death is a mortal dream," so "sin, sickness and death should cease through Christian Science." How it comes to pass that man, being the image of God, and incapable of sin, comes into the condition which is characterized as "mortal mind," and comes to entertain the illusions of sin and sickness, our author does not tell us. Sin, we are assured, is not a deliberate choice of evil, not a transgression of God's laws, consequent upon man's freedom of will, but it is simply the result of inverted thinking; a dream, and a phantom, which has no real existence.

This is a conclusion as startling and dangerous as it is unscriptural, and one calculated to subvert the very foundations of morality. It is rankest

[1] Page 476. [2] Page 111. [3] Page 207.

Antinomianism. The guilt of sin is wholly ignored, the idea is not entertained by the Christian Scientist, who has therefore, no need of a Savior; and the dreadful consequences of sin upon the sinner are lightly and jauntily passed over. We are told indeed, that "while the spell of belief remains unbroken, sin, sickness, and death will seem real, (even as the experiences of the sleeping dreams seem real) until the Science of man's unbroken harmony breaks the illusion with its own unbroken reality."[1] But this is a feeble safeguard, and a poor substitute for the Scriptural teaching of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and such laxity of doctrine may readily be taken by the evil minded as an excuse for rushing into all sorts of depravity, since they are assured that God has no knowledge of sin, and does not punish the sinner, and sin moreover, is but a phantom, and a dream within a dream, which cannot affect the soul, nor cause it to lose its hold upon eternal life.

It is hard to understand how any person of intelligence, who believes the Bible to be the Word of God, and has been instructed in the Christian faith, can accept as truth a system

[1] Page 490.

which is so manifestly at variance with Divine Revelation, and the teachings of the Christian Church.

Instead of the old faith in God our Father, and our Savior Jesus Christ, we are asked to receive a new religion, which has for its central doctrine the theory of the non-existence of the material universe; a doctrine so manifestly absurd, that robust common sense revolts at it.

A religion which has no clear conception of a personal God and an individual immortality, which knows nothing of sin, and has no need of a savior; a religion which has cut itself off from historic Christianity, and is without a creed, without sacraments, without prayer, without public worship. A system which conceives of light without darkness, sunshine without shadow, good without evil.

We cannot account for the influence it exerts over the minds of so many unless we hold that it is one of the manifestations of that strong delusion which according to the prophecy recorded by St. Paul, God shall send upon the earth in the latter times, when the Man of Sin shall be revealed with signs and lying wonders.

The disciple of Christian Science is taught that when he abandons the false belief in mat-

ter, he emerges from the condition of "mortal mind," and is thenceforth sinless. He does not need forgiveness of his past sins, since God takes no note of sin, and is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. His sin falls from him with his false belief in matter, and he enters upon a life of perfection, and oneness with God.

For such an one there is no longer need of prayer, since "petitions only bring mortals the results of their own belief," and "audible prayer cannot change the unalterable truth, or give us an understanding of it."[1]

The Eucharist to him becomes a "dead rite," for since "Christ, Truth, has come to us in demonstration, no commemoration is necessary for He is Immanuel, or God with us; and if a friend be with us, why need we memorials of that friend?"[2] Baptism is wholly ignored. The Scriptures are emptied of their evident meaning, and twisted into strange and grotesque forms. If there is any passage that cannot be bent to suit her fancy, Mrs. Eddy has a short and easy way out of the difficulty, by imputing to the translator "a false sense of belief."[3]

As an example of her exegesis, let me quote the following.

[1] Page 317. [2] p. 339.. [3] p. 537.

"The word Adam is from the Hebrew *adamah*, signifying the *red color of the ground, dust, nothingness.* Divide the name Adam into two syllables, and it reads, *a dam*, or obstruction. This suggests the thought of something fluid, of mortal mind in solution, of the darkness which seemed to appear when "darkness was upon the face of the deep," and matter stood as opposed to Spirit, as that which is accursed."[1] Is it not silly?

In short, this system is not Christian, if Christianity be that faith which is expressed in the Nicene Creed: and it is not Science, unless we agree to ignore the evident facts of consciousness, the evidence of common sense, and the general consent of all mankind from the beginning as to the nature of self-evident truth.

What then, can we say more of it? What is the kernel of truth that gives it vitality?

In the first place it is an emphatic protest against the gross materialism of the age in which we live, when men need to be reminded, as never before, that "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." If Christian Science help to

[1] p. 233.

detach us from our dependence upon the world of sense, and to fix our minds upon the eternal verities of God, it will not have been in vain.

It is likewise a protest against that pride of intellect which boasts itself against God, and issues into so-called Agnosticism; for whatever be its faults as a metaphysical and a theological system, Christian Science denies any such separation of man from his Maker, as that he cannot know Him. And instead of the dreary hopelessness of nescience, it affirms "that the energy and act of the spiritual man consists in knowing that he is receptive of the constant influx of Divine Intelligence," and this certainly is a doctrine of eternal hope.

Christian Science, moreover is a protest against the paganism of an age which tries to live without God; for it teaches constantly that God is our life, and that in Him we live and move and have our being.

More than all, this system furnishes men and women with an incentive to do what the Christian religion rightly understood, always enables them to do; namely to live with a quiet mind, without worry, and without anxiety. And here, I believe is the real secret of its power.

If only they were faithful, and believed the promises of their Master Jesus Christ, and lived according to His precepts; if only they would take the Gospel for their rule of life, all Christians would cast out of their hearts the evil spirits of fear and anger, and live calm and cheerful, and rational lives. If only we had faith in God, and belief in His power and His willingness to help us, we should live without that anxiety and fretful worry, which is the great curse and despoiler of human life.

"Be not anxious for the morrow," said our Lord, "for the morrow will be anxious for itself." We are disquieted and anxious because we have not faith; our lives are soured and spoiled, we become peevish and fretful; we are hypochondriacs and invalids, when God would have us strong and cheerful and well.

The secret of godliness is the secret of health and contentment as well; and Christian Science, although it ignores the great fact that God employs the discipline of suffering, and the alchemy of sorrow to lead men to Him and to train and develop character; although it forgets "that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," yet it has conferred a benefit upon humanity by point-

ing to the fact that cheerfulness and contentment are among the primary and essential Christian virtues, and that sickness and sin are very closely related the one to the other.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THERAPEUTICS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

This brings us to the third division of our subject, namely, the therapeutics of Christian Science.

The question at once arises, does this system truly alleviate pain and cure disease? And without hesitation we must answer, it frequently does. I hold that this is a clearly demonstrated fact, the proofs of which are abundant and easily obtained.

By this I do not mean to say that it is a panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to, or that it is all that its adherents claim for it, but I do assert that many remarkable cures are effected by it, and that in the treatment of the sick its influence is generally beneficent.

If this be so, one naturally asks, does it not establish the truth of Christian Science, and constitute the best possible justification of the metaphysical and theological systems we have been considering? and I answer, no. The metaphysical theories of Christian Science have

nothing to do with the therapeutic success of the system, but are wholly independent of it, and must be considered apart from it.

Any other theory might be substituted for that which Mrs. Eddy has formulated, and if the same general lines of practice were followed, the results would be similar.

The fact appears to be, that the Christian Scientists have hit upon a principle of great importance and wide usefulness, of the very nature of which they are ignorant, a principle which they associate with theories which are both false and irrelevant.

If men should teach that electrical energy were due, let us say for example to lunar emanations, it would not affect the nature of electrical phenomena, provided the conditions necessary to their production were complied with; nor is the character of the therapeutic phenomena we are considering, affected by the theories commonly associated with them. To what then, are the cures effected by Christian Science healers due, and how are they to be accounted for?

To answer these questions fully, according to the conclusions of modern science, would require a treatise much more extensive than this, and I can only briefly state my views, which I believe,

are those of the most competent authorities.

It is claimed by the greater number of those who have investigated the system we are examining, that its alleged cures are to be accounted for in the following manner.

First: that they are almost wholly confined to nervous and hysterical disorders, in which the symptoms are alleviated by the quiet state of mind, and the strong expectation of a cure into which the patient is brought by the nature of the treatment he receives.

The effects of fear and anxiety upon the human system are too well known to need comment, and the calming influence of a practitioner who assures the patient of recovery, and ignores disquieting symptoms, cannot but be effective in many cases. Often all that is necessary to bring about the recovery of those suffering from disorders of this character, is an effort of the will to enable them to throw off the delusions which take the form of disease. Christian Science healers strive to arouse in their patients a vigorous resistence to the idea of disease, and they are frequently successful.

Such efforts are not confined to the practitioners of this school; physicians of every sort recognize their value, and strive in every way they

can to secure the co-operation of their patients in their efforts to bring about a cure. We refer all cases which fall under this class, to the action of that mysterious influence which it is so commonly asserted that mind has over matter. That such an influence exists, no physician doubts, but as to the nature of the influence, and the extent to which it may be employed, and the means necessary to evoke it there is no general consent. To say that mind influences matter, is to give an explanation which does not explain anything.

It is as if we should hold as men once did, that the influence of the moon is the cause of lunacy; to say so does not prove anything, and facts must be adduced as evidence before the theory can be entitled to serious consideration. So it is not enough to say that mind influences matter, and that the expectation of a cure hastens it. Without doubt the statement is correct as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough.

Every physician knows that there are times when the administration of sugar pellets and colored water given to a patient under the belief that they are powerful drugs produces marked pathological effects; but this fact merely points to the existence of a law, of the very nature of

which our schools of medicine are for the most part ignorant.

Christian Science healers know no more about this law than does the most ignorant country practitioner, although they evoke it more often, and usually with beneficent results.

In the second place, the cures we are considering, are ascribed to the operation of the principle which we call the Vis Medicatrix Naturæ, or the healing power of nature. Disease is not a normal, but an abnormal condition, and nature constantly seeks to heal it, and to restore the patient to the normal condition of health.

The most intelligent system of medical practice, and the most successful, is that which most clearly recognizes this power and seeks to assist it; to help nature, not to thwart her.

The cures effected by the physicians of any school are due in the first place not to the remedies employed, but to the recuperative efforts of nature. In other words the cure is due to the Vis Medicatrix Naturæ, and not to the physician. In saying this I am saying nothing in derogation of the skill of medical men. Their duty is to assist nature when she stands in need of assistance, and the more intelligent they are,

the more fully they recognize this fact, and confine themselves to this line of practice.

Sir John Forbes, an eminent English physician is quoted by Dr. Buckley as saying: "First, that in a large proportion of the cases treated by allopathic physicians, the disease is cured by nature, and not by them. Second, that in a lesser but still not a small proportion, the disease is cured by nature in spite of them; in other words their interference retarding instead of assisting the cure. Third, that in, consequently, a considerable proportion of diseases it would fare as well or better with patients if all remedies,—at least all active remedies, especially drugs—were abandoned."

Again Sir John Marshall is quoted as saying, "The Vis Medicatrix Naturæ is the agent to employ in the healing of an ulcer, or the union of a broken bone; and it is equally true that the physician and surgeon never cured a disease; he only assists the natural processes of cure." [1]

This healing power of nature is always at work, whatever healing system men employ, and if the faith-healer is deprived of any advantage by neglecting to administer proper remedies, he

[1] "Faith Healing," page 277.

is more than compensated by the fact that he never administers the wrong ones.

More than all this, often it is enough to restore to health the patients of the Christian Science healers, that they are told to pay no attention to symptons, and to regulate their diet and exercise according to their own inclinations; in other words to yield themselves to nature, and to let her do her work undisturbed.

Then too, we must consider the fact that many diseases, perhaps most, have a tendency to issue into health without any further assistance from without than is given by good nursing and proper nourishment. It is said that in no inconsiderable proportion of cases even tuberculosis naturally terminates in recovery. Thus it may happen at the crisis of disease, after medical treatment has been vainly employed, that the Christian Scientist steps in and is awarded the credit of the cure for which he is in no way responsible. And lastly, it is urged that while Christian Science gets credit for the cures which are thought to be due to it, that it keeps no record of its failures; and that it either ignores them, or attributes them to lack of co-operation on the part of the patient, or to the atmosphere of doubt hy which be is surrounded.

All these explanations of the cures of Christian Science must be considered, and they explain a great deal, but not all; and when we have given them due weight we find that they are not sufficient to account for the undoubted facts of healing which must be credited to the system we are considering. But here we must take account of another fact of the utmost importance to our inquiry. It is that there are many other agencies which are as effective in the alleviation of suffering, and the cure of disease, as this, but which in theory have absolutely nothing in common with it.

Few are ignorant of the fact that numerous well authenticated cures of the most stubborn diseases are annually reported from the Grotto of Lourdes, the shrine of Ste. Anne de Beaupre and numerous other wonder-working shrines and holy places in Roman Catholic countries.

We are told by no less an authority than Dr. Moll of Berlin, that fifty or sixty patients annually, are sent to Lourdes from the great French hospital of the Salpêtrière, to be treated there when other means fail.

Then the Mind Healers, the Faith Curers, the Mesmerists, the Spiritualists and many other sects which have widely diverse theories but

employ similar methods, have about the same measure of success that the Christian Scientists have, but lacking their vigorous propaganda, and their colossal self-assertion, attract less public attention.

Besides these there are many individuals who adhere to no particular sect, and who work along independent lines who have done wonderful things in attestation of their alleged divinely given power over sickness; men who have been alternately regarded as saints and charlatans.

The list would be a long one if I should write down the names of all these of whom I have read, from Paracelsus and Prince Hoenlohe to the zouave Jacob and our own Schlatter. These men have nothing in common except that they all appear to possess a mysterious power over disease, a power which none of them has been able to account for, but which is without doubt in large measure real. None of them, I believe, was a conscious cheat, and all of them have done much good and received small thanks for it from the world at large. But miraculous cures are not peculiar to the believers in any one religion even. If Christians drive away disease by prayer and the imposition of hands, Buddhists, Brahmans, and men of many strange faiths, the

Red Indians of our own land, and the black men of Africa accomplish similar results by similar methods.

No one who has investigated the religious customs of savage tribes, can doubt that the incantations, charms, and medicine-makings of their priests are often effective, and that marvellous results sometimes follow the rude therapeutic methods they employ; methods which differ from the approved practice of European schools, as fundamentally as do the methods of the Christian Scientists and Mind Curers.

All this goes to show that the theory upon which the practice of metaphysical or mental healing is based, is of small consequence provided the suggestion of cure be vividly conveyed to the mind of the patient. It is simply an invocation of that mysterious power of mind over matter whose existence we all recognize.

We may say that it is all a matter of the imagination, but until we know more definitely what the nature of the human imagination is, and what are its functions and limitations, we explain nothing by so saying.

Of recent years men of science have studied this subject, and have arrived at some remarkable conclusions. They have found that with-

out invoking the aid of superstition, they are able to produce effects indentical with those of the Hindoo Yogis and Fakirs, the Medicine-men of the Red Indians, the wonder-workers of the middle ages and the Christian Scientists of to-day.

The principle upon which all these phenomena are based is known as the principle of Suggestion, and the phenomena are known as the phenomena of Hypnosis. The German psychologist Max Dessoir has formulated the theory of the "Doppel Ich," or Double Ego, in which he teaches "that human personality is a unity merely to our consciousness, but that it consists really of at least two clearly distinguishable personalities" rather I should say, states of consciousness, "each held together by its own chain of memories." He shows that there is an unconscious intelligence in man, which is evidenced by the actions we call automatic; and that there is an unconscious memory distinguishable from recollection, and independent of it.

"The mental processes which take place consciously to the man are called the primary consciousness, and those which go on without his knowledge, the secondary consciousness; the

action of both together is a state of double consciousness." [1]

This secondary consciousness is constantly amenable to suggestion, and has control of the physical functions and sensations.

Hypnosis is a state in which the secondary consciousness is aroused and brought to the surface. It is wholly a subjective condition, induced by suggestion, either, as is common, from without,—external suggestion—or more rarely from within,—auto-suggestion. In either case susceptibility to suggestion is the chief and distinguishing phenomenon of hypnosis.

By suggestion we mean "the insinuation of a belief or impulse into the mind of the subject by any means, as by words or gestures, usually by emphatic declaration; also the impulse of trust which leads to the effectiveness of such incitement."[2] The hypnotic condition is always self-induced, although the incentive which arouses it is usually external. This condition has many degrees of intensity, from the light hypnosis, which is ordinarily indistinguishable from the normal condition, to the profound trance.

[1] Moll's "Hypnotism," pp. 239–240.

[2] The Century Dictionary.

The phenomena of hypnosis in its lighter stages, may be manifested in a person who is unconscious that his normal psychical balance has been disturbed; more than this, suggestibility, which is the essential characteristic of hypnosis, sometimes exists when there is no evidence that the subject is in the hypnotic state.

"Suggestibility consists in the impressing on the mind of an idea, image, movement, which the person reproduces voluntarily or involuntarily; suggestibility is natural to man as a social animal. Under certain conditions the suggestibility which is always present in man, may increase to an extraordinary degree, and the result is a stampede, a mob, an epidemic,"[1] or, I may add, a wave of religious enthusiasm or a widespread and intense interest in Christian Science.

The attention which hypnotism is receiving to-day is due chiefly to the fact that it evidently possesses therapeutic utility, and it is becoming more and more clear to physicians, that a thorough examination of it is necessary, with the view to the incorporation of its beneficial methods into current medical practice.

Many authorities hold that since hypnosis is a subjective state in which susceptibility to

[1]Boris Sidis, Century Magazine, October, 1896.

suggestion is heightened, that suggestibility exists apart from recognized hypnotic conditions, and has an independent value of its own; but since the effects of suggestion, whether in or out of the recognized states of hypnosis are identical, differing only in degree, the opinion that amenability to suggestion characterizes and constitutes hypnosis may reasonably be entertained.

Apart from all theories as to the nature of the influence, it is certain that suggestion is a healing agent, and that it can even control organic disease, and cause organic changes in the human body; hence it is certain when better understood, to take a high place among the recognized agencies for the alleviation of pain and the cure of disease.

It is true, as has been so often stated, that complete insensibility to pain may be produced in the hypnotic state, even to such an extent as to render possible the performance of severe surgical operations upon patients under its influence, although we are assured by the best authorities that such instances of complete analgesia are much rarer than popular writers represent them as being.

Now without going further into this subject,

let us ask, what are the bearings of all these facts and conclusions I have cited, upon the curative practice of Christian Science?

I think the answer is evident. To me at least it seems plain, that the therapeutic phenomena of this system are simply phenomena of hypnosis due to suggestion, and produced for the most part, in ignorance of their real character, and ascribed to fanciful and erroneous theories in metaphysics and theology.

In order to prove this proposition we must be able to show that every cure which Christian Science has ever performed, can be paralleled if not surpassed, by those wrought in the strictly scientific and material school of suggestive therapeutics. The literature of this subject is already voluminous, consisting chiefly of works by German and French writers, some of whose books, and perhaps the most valuable, are accessible to the English reader in the form of translations.

To illustrate the practical identity of method followed by the true scientists and the pseudo-scientists let me quote the following passage from Dr. Albert Moll's "Hypnotism."[1]

"Suppose we wish to cure a headache by arous-

[1] p. 319.

ing in the subject the idea that the headache is gone. Spontaneous reflection would prevent this in most waking people, but in hypnosis ideas are more easily established. If the subject accepts the suggestion we may be sure that in the hypnotic state he does not feel the pain. But now we have to prevent the return of the pain after waking. Either external post-hypnotic suggestion or auto-suggestion will do this. We can make the patient continue to think the pain is gone after he wakes. He need not be conscious of this idea in the sense of remembering it. On the contrary the less conscious the idea is, the more effect it will have, because reflection will not struggle against it. Auto-suggestion is the second plan.

"The patient finding himself without pain in hypnosis, may convince himself that pain is not a necessary consequence of his state, and this idea may under some circumstances be strong enough to prevent the return of the pain. The more easily an idea can be established in a subject, the quicker a therapeutic result can be induced. And the deeper the hypnosis, the more easily ideas can be established. Consequently the deeper the hypnosis, the better the cure."

Now I submit that if my conclusions are even

approximately correct, there is nothing to be gained by burdening the practice of suggestive therapeutics, with a metaphysical theory which denies the evident facts of consciousness, and opposes itself to the judgment of common sense and ordinary intelligence, and with a theological system which is at variance with almost every conclusion of historic Christianity and religious experience. Not only is there nothing to be gained, but there is much to be lost by erecting a novel religious system about this method of healing which is certain to modify to a great extent the present school of medical practice, and to prove itself of untold value to humanity at large. Anything which tends to make it unintelligible, and to keep it the exclusive property of a semi-religious sect is to be deprecated and opposed.

To what, finally, we may well ask, is due the fascination which Christian Science exercises over the minds of so many intelligent and cultivated people ?

This is a hard question to answer, but we may refer it in part at least, to the novelty and strangeness of the theories which are advanced, which in itself is to many minds a great attraction; to the dogmatism and air of conviction

with which those theories are advanced; to the undoubted reality of the benefits it has conferred upon suffering humanity, and last but not least, to the mysterious nature of its operations. Added to all this there is the suggestion of a mental epidemic which should receive careful attention at the hands of the students of psychical phenomena.

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